

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN

LEAFLETS
of
POPULAR INFORMATION

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GODETIA CYLINDRICA
BAND GODETIA

Prepared
by
RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN
of the
NATIVE PLANTS OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Ana Canyon
Orange County
California

GODETIA CYLINDRICA

BAND GODETIA

Onagraceae

Evening-primrose Family

An erect annual 1 to 2 ft. high, simple and slender or 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ ft. broad. Leaves filiform, 1 to 2 in. long. Flowers scattered along upper portions of the stems or somewhat aggregated in loose terminal clusters. Buds drooping, becoming erect in anthesis. Calyx $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 in. long, green, turning purple; sepals 4, remaining united and turning to one side beneath the flower. Calyx tube with a ring of short hairs about $1/8$ in. below insertion of stamens. Open flowers are nearly 2 in. across. Petals 4, obovate, truncate at apex, about 1 in. long, outer side evenly lilac-purple, inner side lighter and varying in color, upper third to half about color of outer surface, lower half lighter with scattered spots of deep purple, base much darker forming a dark central ring in each flower. Stamens 8, purplish, inserted on a ring at base of petals, arranged in two series; four long alternate with petals, the filaments and anthers each about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. long; four short opposite the petals; all stamens at first erect but anthers becoming curved in anthesis. Style longer than stamens, mainly creamy-white, stigma 4-lobed, each lobe being about $1/8$ in. long. Ovary 4-celled, inferior, only lightly pubescent. Capsule 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, cylindrical, nearly glabrous. Seeds numerous, small, grayish or brownish.

Godetia cylindrica was described by Dr. Jepson of the University of California in 1907 as a variety of G. bottae, from specimens he had obtained on Waltham Creek, S. W. Fresno Co. Recently botanists, including Dr. Jepson, have recognized it as a distinct species. There are about 25 other species of Godetia known from Western North America and South America, of which about half are native to California. A few California species were early introduced into cultivation in Europe and from them have been developed many fine single and double strains. Godetia cylindrica, however, seems to have been overlooked in horticulture.

In the wild Godetia cylindrica is found in the lower foothills, mainly in the Douglas or Blue Oak belt, in the Sierra Nevada foothills from Madera Co. to Kern Co., and in the South Coast Ranges from S.W. Fresno Co. to Los Angeles Co. It seems to be most abundant in the foothills of Fresno and Tulare Cos.,

where in May entire hillsides are often brilliantly colored with the rich lilac-purple flowers. Wild plants as a rule are small and do not bear many flowers but make up for this by their large numbers.

This species was probably not cultivated prior to its use at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in 1934. We have two distinctive color strains, both of which were obtained in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Our strain from Yokohl Valley, Tulare Co. has a very deeply-colored central spot, while our strain from Dunlap, Fresno Co. is much lighter. Both strains are equally beautiful.

Godetia cylindrica should be planted in medium or light soil with good drainage and in full sun. Seeds may be broadcast or drilled in rows. Best results are obtained from plantings made in the fall or not later than January. Very small plants may be transplanted. This species requires a drier situation than some of the well known garden forms and care should be exercised in irrigation. No water should be applied after the plants begin to bloom. Godetias bloom later than many other wild flowers but this species is one of the first and will ordinarily begin to flower late in April and continue for a month or two. Under cultivated conditions the plants attain heights of nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. and will often have over 50 flowers open at one time. Seeds are easily harvested as the capsules do not readily shatter and spread the seeds.

As a cut flower Godetia cylindrica lasts well and is best when used alone but may also be used with other wild flowers. Buds open after cutting, so a bouquet is usually showier the second day after arranging. The flowers tend to close at night but even then are very attractive, although different, as the outer dark surfaces of the petals are much more evident.

Of the little known species of the Godetias this is probably the finest and we think it is beautiful enough to merit a place in gardens without extensive horticultural improvement and selection. However, there are several other California species that are especially fine and that have equally distinctive flowers. Some of these others should also be grown.

Seeds of Godetia cylindrica are not yet on sale by any of the commercial seedsmen but at least one firm is now growing the species for future sale.

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN
Of The Native Plants of California.

Established 1927

In Memory of John W. Bixby

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Purpose: A scientific institution devoted
to the growth and study of the native plants
of California for their botanical, horticult-
ural and popular features.

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MAIL ADDRESS

R. F. D., Anaheim, California .

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